

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

**B** A method ~~for manufacturing a vehicle frame assembly~~ includes hydroforming a pair of side rails from a single closed structural member so as to having a plurality of mounting areas integrally formed thereon. The frame assembly includes a pair of

5 longitudinally extending side rails having a plurality of transverse cross member extending therebetween. Each of the side rails is formed from a single integral closed structural member that extends the entire length of the frame assembly. The cross members extend generally perpendicular to the side rails and may be formed having any conventional structure. Each of the side rails is manufactured having a plurality

10 of integrally formed mounting structures to facilitate the connection of the various components (not shown) of the vehicle directly to the frame assembly without the use of any brackets and mounts. The side rails are hydroformed to desired shapes and have respective pluralities of apertures and protrusions formed therein. The side rails are formed into desired shapes such that the apertures and protrusions can be located

15 in exactly the same positions relative to the frame assembly as the corresponding apertures and protrusions provided on the various brackets and mounts of the prior art frame assembly. As a result, the other components of the vehicle can be connected directly to the side rails to form the frame assembly. This direct side rail mounting structure eliminates the need for the various brackets and mounts provided in the prior

20 art frame assembly and, as a result, greatly reduces the time and expense involved in manufacturing the ladder frame assembly of this invention.